

March 27, 2000

**MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Fine Particulate (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) Air Monitoring Data Reporting

FROM: J. David Mobley, Acting Director  
Emissions, Monitoring, and Analysis Division (MD-14)

TO: Deputy Director, Office of Ecosystem Protection, Region I  
Director, Division of Environmental Planning and Protection, Region II  
Director, Air Protection Division, Region III  
Director, Air, Pesticides, and Toxics Management Division, Region IV  
Director, Air and Radiation Division, Region V  
Director, Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division, Region VI  
Director, Air, RCRA, and Toxics Division, Region VII  
Director, Air and Radiation Program, Region VIII  
Director, Air Division, Region IX  
Director, Office of Air, Region X  
Director, Office of Environmental Measurement and Evaluation, Region I  
Director, Environmental Services and Assessment Division, Region II  
Director, Environmental Services Division, Regions III and VII  
Director, Science & Ecosystems Support Division, Region IV  
Director, Resource Management Division, Region V  
Assistant Regional Administrator, Management Division, Region VI  
Assistant Regional Administrator, Office of Technical and  
Management Services, Region VIII  
Assistant Regional Administrator, Policy and Management Division, Region IX  
Director, Office of Environmental Assessment, Region X

I am writing to provide you with our preliminary examination of the annual 1999 PM<sub>2.5</sub> data completeness statistics using the approaches necessary for National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) comparisons, outlined in 40 CFR 50 Appendix N. First, let me commend your effort at getting the FRM network deployed. Our records indicate that 94 percent of the network is in place and operating, which I think is a phenomenal accomplishment for us all. Second, I trust that you will share my distress that only six percent of the sites are reporting complete data for 1999 as of March 21, 2000. With the numerous applications of the data desired at this time and in the near future, I am writing to urge

your immediate attention toward addressing and improving PM<sub>2.5</sub> air quality data reporting.

The first year of data is due to the EPA by April 1, with subsequent reporting agency certification by July 1, 2000. It is important that we more closely examine the data reporting statistics, take action to get the appropriate data submitted, and identify any situations where we expect data gaps to exist. I would like to hear back from each Region by April 10, 2000, on what we should expect from your monitoring agencies for PM<sub>2.5</sub> data collection and reporting. I have included specific topics below for your feedback. We will contact each of your offices to set-up conference calls for April 10 through 12, at which time we will review the situation and any proposed corrective actions.

### **PM<sub>2.5</sub> Monitoring Equipment Deployment and Operation**

Nationally, our records show that there are 1,023 PM<sub>2.5</sub> Federal Reference Method (FRM) sites operating at this time. [Attachment A](#) provides you with a summary of where these sites are operating along with initial deployment information on the continuous and speciation portions of the network. Our expectations for a total number of compliance sites are 1,050-1,100, and we anticipate that a few new sites will be installed this Spring. In your response to this memorandum, please indicate what you expect to see in terms of a full PM<sub>2.5</sub> compliance network for each State in your Region. If we have funded sites that are not currently operating, please indicate when these sites will become operational. If any of our data are incorrect or out of date, please use this opportunity to update our information.

### **Reporting PM<sub>2.5</sub> Data to AIRS**

Data reporting has improved in recent months; however, very little complete data are currently in AIRS for the PM<sub>2.5</sub> program. Only 66 sites have currently satisfied the data completeness requirement for 1999. We recognize that there have been many operational issues in this first year of deployment, and we expect to see related reductions in data completeness. Despite these operational issues, we still see even lower data reporting statistics than can be explained by sampler problems. [Attachment B](#) lists, by State, each PM<sub>2.5</sub> sampler and its associated data reporting completeness percentage for each quarter in 1999. We included all available PM<sub>2.5</sub> sites, by AIRS site and POC identification numbers, which include collocated samplers. As you can see in [Attachment B](#), 'missing' data present a very large problem. Much of the second, third, and fourth quarter data have not been entered into AIRS. We have not provided separate precision and accuracy statistics at this time because these data have generally not been reported. We do intend to analyze these data as well as the mass data. In your response to this memorandum, please provide us with information on when your States will input their data, what tools they still need in order to accomplish this task, and what we should expect in the months leading up to the July 1, 2000, deadline for State certification of data.

Our office has also recognized that the limitations on Internet access to the Agency's data systems, including AIRS, has adversely impacted some monitoring agencies' abilities to submit air quality data to AIRS. Please refer to the attached memo from John Seitz on "Internet Access to the EPA's Data Systems," dated March 24, 2000. Please pursue the available mechanisms to submit the data to AIRS.

## **PM<sub>2.5</sub> Data Qualifiers**

Several monitoring agencies and Regions have requested that we establish a better system for allowing State and local agencies to qualify their data through the use of data flags. In conjunction with the Regional Office monitoring and quality assurance staff, we have developed a system for flagging PM<sub>2.5</sub> data. [Attachment C](#) provides details on this approach. We believe that this flagging system will allow some State and local agencies to be more comfortable in submitting PM<sub>2.5</sub> data.

We are looking forward to hearing from you on this important program. If you have any questions or need assistance in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me or our monitoring staff. Michael Papp and Lee Byrd will discuss this memorandum in more detail on the March 29 conference call with your Regional monitoring contacts. Your attention to this matter will be appreciated.

### **Attachments**

cc: J. Bachmann, OAQPS/OD  
 B. Becker, STAPPA/ALAPCO  
 L. Byrd, OAQPS/EMAD  
 T. Curran, OAQPS/OD  
 F. Dimmick, OAQPS/EMAD  
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